

Jersey City Hospital, Nurses Homes
(Jersey City Medical Center, Nurses Homes
No. 1 and No. 2)
112-114 Clifton Place
Jersey City
Hudson County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-891-A

HABS
NJ,
9-JERC1,
14-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Mid-Atlantic Region, National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

JERSEY CITY HOSPITAL, NURSES HOMES HABS No. NJ-891-A
(Jersey City Medical Center, Nurses Homes No. 1 and No. 2)

Location: 112-114 Clifton Place, Jersey City, Hudson County, New Jersey

Present Owner: City of Jersey City

Present Use: Demolished March, 1982; site now holds a parking facility

Significance: Established in 1907, the hospital Nurses School existed until about 1960. Nurses Homes No. 1 and No. 2 (occasionally called Central Hall and West Hall, respectively), built in 1918 and 1917, not only housed the hospital's nurses but also the entire Nurses School in the 1920s. Architecturally, these buildings represent the early stages of the career of John T. Rowland, the most important architect in Jersey City during the first half of the twentieth century.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of construction: Nurses Home No. 1 - 1918; Nurses Home No. 2 - 1917
2. Architect: John T. Rowland, Jr.

While no comprehensive study has been made of Rowland or his architecture, it can be stated that he was the most important architect in Jersey City, if not Hudson County, during the first half of the twentieth century. He was born in Rockland County, New York, on October 20, 1872. His father, a mason and contractor, moved the family to Jersey City in the early 1880s, where John Jr. finished his preparatory schooling at Hasbrouck Institute in 1889. His architectural training at Cornell University and the University of Pennsylvania during the 1890s stressed Beaux Arts ideals. He established his office in Jersey City, where he practiced exclusively.

On November 1, 1900, just after his twenty-eighth birthday, he was appointed to the post of architect for the Jersey City Board of Education. He retained that post until his death on January 22, 1945. During those years virtually every school built in Jersey City was designed by him, including 25 grade schools, three high schools, and seven parochial schools. He was the favorite architect of three city mayors, and also designed two banks (and additions to other banks), at least two large apartment complexes, All Saints Roman Catholic Church (and additions to other churches), a public bath, and many small commercial buildings.

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His greatest enterprise, however, was the Jersey City Hospital complex, called the Medical Center after about 1930. Replacing an earlier hospital of 1882, the second city hospital was built circa 1902 to circa 1918. The third hospital complex was also designed by Rowland, with the assistance of Christian Ziegler, but on a more monumental scale.

Rowland's designs appear to have been affected by the mayors under which they were done. Under Mayors Mark Fagan and Otto Wittpenn (1902-1917), Rowland's plans tended to be for horizontal brick blocks of four or five stories, trimmed with stone cornices, and stone door and window surrounds. Under the mayoral patronage of Frank Hague (1917-1947), Rowland's buildings became much taller (ten to 15 stories), and sheathed in brick with granite, concrete or marble facing. The increasingly elaborate and exotic decorative details were inspired by ancient Rome, or Mayan or Assyrian cultures, and used in a more architectonic and sculptural manner to define stories, bays, and corners. The Nurses Homes represent an earlier, more conservative stage in Rowland's career, prior to his imaginative use of Art Deco and Moderne vocabulary.

3. Original and subsequent owner: City of Jersey City
 4. Original plans and construction: The G.M. Hopkins Platbook of Jersey City shows the plans of these two buildings basically as they were when demolished in 1982 (see maps 2 & 3). Each is rectangular, and they relate to each other as a "t" with a sloping top. They were connected by a tower unit. The main entrance to both nurses homes was at 114 Clifton Place, in the center of the southern longitudinal side of Nurses Home No. 2.
 5. Alterations and additions: Judging from the Hopkins map of 1919 (map 3), the south porch of Home No. 1 was widened sometime between that year and 1924, when a photograph in the Symposium (nurses school yearbook) shows that porch as it was when demolished (see figure 3). About 1980 a metal-sheathed stairwell was added to the southwest corner of Home No. 1. The cornice of Home No. 2 was removed, probably in the 1950s. These buildings were repeatedly vandalized since 1979 so no interior moldings or fixtures remained at the time of demolition.
- B. Historical Context: The hospital's history at this site began in 1881, when the earliest City Hospital was built. The second complex, begun about 1902 under Mayor Mark Fagan and designed by Rowland, superceded the first, and heralded the use of hospital structures as political monuments in Jersey City. A hospital school of nursing was established in 1907. By 1914, Mayor Mark Fagan was negotiating with architect Rowland in regards to building a nurses home to cost about \$30,000. However, these plans were not fulfilled until after World

War I.

The nurses homes were used as residences and nursing classrooms until the 1960s or 1970s when they became "Patrick House," a drug and alcohol abuse treatment center for both in- and out-patients. Standing vacant after about 1979, they were demolished in March, 1982.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Designed in a Tuscan villa manner, the nurses homes reflected the original hospital buildings by Rowland. (Rowland's other original buildings were demolished in the 1930s to make way for the present gigantic granite buildings also designed by him, during the mayoral patronage of Frank Hague.) Nurses Home No. 1 was four stories with a basement, and a three-story enclosed porch on the south end (see figures 3, 5, and 9; and map 2). Nurses Home No. 2, a five-story building with a basement, had a three-story enclosed porch at the west end. At the east end, adjoining Home No. 1, was a tower of six stories with a basement (see figures 3-8; and map 2).
2. Condition of fabric: fair to poor

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions:
 - a. Nurses Home No. 1: approximately 45' x 125', with its long axis oriented SE to NW; 65' tall (ground to eaves)
 - b. Nurses Home No. 2: approximately 40' x 115'; 75' tall (ground to eaves)
2. Foundations: concrete
3. Walls: load-bearing brick with face brick
4. Structural system: floors carried on steel beams
5. Porches: Three, one on each of the three lower stories, of glazed masonry, with a terrace on top fenced in metal and brick (see figure 3).
6. Chimneys: two brick, one on each small end

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7. Openings:

- a. Doorways: Nurses Home No. 1 - A one-story projecting portal with no distinctive architectural characteristics at the north end on the basement level served as one entry. However, the building was mainly entered under-roof from the connecting tower link to Nurses Home No. 2. A minor entry was located on the east side on the one-story terrace unit connecting to the 1930 Nurses Home No. 3 (Fairbank Hall; see maps 1 and 2).

Nurses Home No. 2 - The main portal was on the south facade in the central bay. It projected from the facade wall, was brick with a stone entablature, featured stone Corinthian capitals on the pilasters, and had an iron railing on top. The total portal was a one-story triumphal arch with glass bifold doors and transom filling the opening (see figure 4).

The secondary entry was at the central bay on the north facade. Brick with stone trim, it projected from the facade wall as a three-sided polygonal shape, two stories high. It had a molded cornice, a water-table and a stringcourse like the main facade. The rectangular door was flanked by metal lamps and surmounted by a metal awning. Filling the bay above the door was a pair of mullioned, sash windows. On each of the two side walls were two sash windows, one on each story.

- b. Windows: Nurses Home No. 1 - The long sides had seven bays (excluding the porch), while the ends were three-bayed. Each bay originally had rectangular, multi-light sash windows almost equal in size. The first-story windows were beneath brick, "blind" arches carried on pilasters. Most other windows had brick lintels with keystones and concrete sills.

Nurses Home No. 2 - Generally the same as Home No. 1, No. 2 has an extra bay at the east end which is the tower connecting the two homes. The tower has five windows (one in each story), with stone lintels and sills. The upper window head, however, is an arch with a keystone. The fifth story of No. 2 has the appearance of a loggia, with mullioned, multi-light windows filling each of the seven bays. At the ends the middle bay was bricked closed. Brick pilasters and moldings surrounded each window (see figures 3, 5, and 6).

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8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: hipped, tile
- b. Cornice, eaves: stone, bracketed cornice over porch;
projecting eaves with metal flashing
- c. Dormers: (only Nurses Home No. 1) four, triangular-shaped
dormers, two on each long side of the building

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: (according to 1938 Tax Assessor's Records)
 - a. First floor: Nurses Home No. 1 - alumnae room, sun parlor,
reception room, five bedrooms, one bathroom, one toilet room

Nurses Home No. 2 - reception room, lobby, office, sun porch
(see figure 8)
 - b. Second, third, and fourth floors: Nurses Home No. 1 - one
bath room, one toilet room, 11 bedrooms

Nurses Home No. 2 - One and two room suites and bath, nine
bedrooms, nine wall lavatories
 - c. Fifth floor: Nurses Home No. 2 - auditorium room seating
1,000 people (used as classroom)
 - d. Basement: Nurses Home No. 2 - six storerooms and two sewing
rooms
- 2. Flooring: steel beams with cement, covered in (variously)
hardwood, terrazzo, tile
- 3. Wall and ceiling finish: varnished wood panelling, plaster,
painted metal
- 4. Openings: molded wooden frames around rectangular doors and
windows
- 5. Decorative features and trim: The steel ceiling beams (carrying
floors) were supported on the first floor by steel piers which
were painted and had simple rectilinear molding.
- 6. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: steam heat supplied from main boiler room (power
house)

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- b. Plumbing: Nurses Home No. 1 - four toilets, seven
bathrooms, 13 built-in tubs, 51 toilet bowls, seven slop
sinks, seven showers

Nurses Home No. 2 - four toilets, six bathrooms, nine
built-in tubs, 31 toilet bowls, six showers

c. Site:

The two Nurses Homes were part of the Jersey City Medical Center complex of buildings. The two structures were situated at the point where Clifton Place changes its direction from east-west to north-south. The long axis of Home No. 1 paralleled the north-south branch of Clifton Place, while the long axis of Home No. 2 paralleled the east-west branch. Concrete terracing and some lawn and landscaping bordered the north facade of Home No. 2 and the northern half of Home No. 1, which also had a small lawn with benches at its southwest corner. Paths led from the main hospital building to the entry of the north facade of Home No. 2, and the entry of the south facade of that building bordered the sidewalk along Clifton Place. The Homes were united visually in orientation, scale, style and setting but were in extreme contrast to the newer, larger structures surrounding them.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Early views:

Heritage Studies, Inc., Preliminary Case Report: Jersey City Medical Center, September 1979 (passim)

Photographic files, New Jersey Room, Free Public Library, Joan Doherty, Head Librarian

B. Selected primary sources:

Maps: G.M. Hopkins Co. (Philadelphia) Map of Jersey City 1919, 1928

Newspapers:

Jersey Journal: 2/28/44, 6/12/44, 3/8/45, 7/27/46, 10/11/46,
3/30/47, 2/2/49, 5/9/49, 1/29/51, 1/23/45

Jersey Observer: 1/23/45, 1/24/45

Hudson Dispatch: 10/12/31, 9/28/36, 1/24/45

New York Times: 1/22/45

C. Publications:

Senior Annual of the Nurses School (called at various times
Symposium, Mnemesyne, and Senior Annual). Without pagination. 1924,
1926, 1927, 1929, 1930, 1931

Jersey City Chamber of Commerce, Jersey City, November 1929; June
1930.

Withey, H.F. & E.R. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects,
Deceased. Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., Los Angeles, 1970.

D. Unpublished Materials:

Brooks, Joseph. "New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory," Jersey City,
Hudson County: Downtown, Ward E, 1980-82.

Letter from William F. Poole, architect, to Eugene O'Connell,
assistant corporate counsel Jersey City, January 5, 1983.

Jersey City Tax Assessor's Records, City Hall, Room 11, Jersey City;
records dating 1938

Wyatt, Charles, "The Story of 26 Journal Square," September 1982.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Paulsen Associates, Jersey City, has the original drawings (by
Rowland, et. al.) of the circa 1929-1940 buildings of the Medical
Center. As the Paulsen collection is only partially accessible, it
is not known if there are drawings of the Nurses Homes.

All newspaper citations listed under "City Hospital" in the Jersey
Journal Index in the New Jersey Room, Free Public Library, 472 Jersey
Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The buildings were demolished in March, 1982 so that the Jersey City Medical
Center Parking Facility could be constructed on the site. The project (Public
Works Grant 01-01-01922) was carried out by the United States Department of
Commerce, Economic Development Administration, Atlantic Regional Office, 10424
Federal Building, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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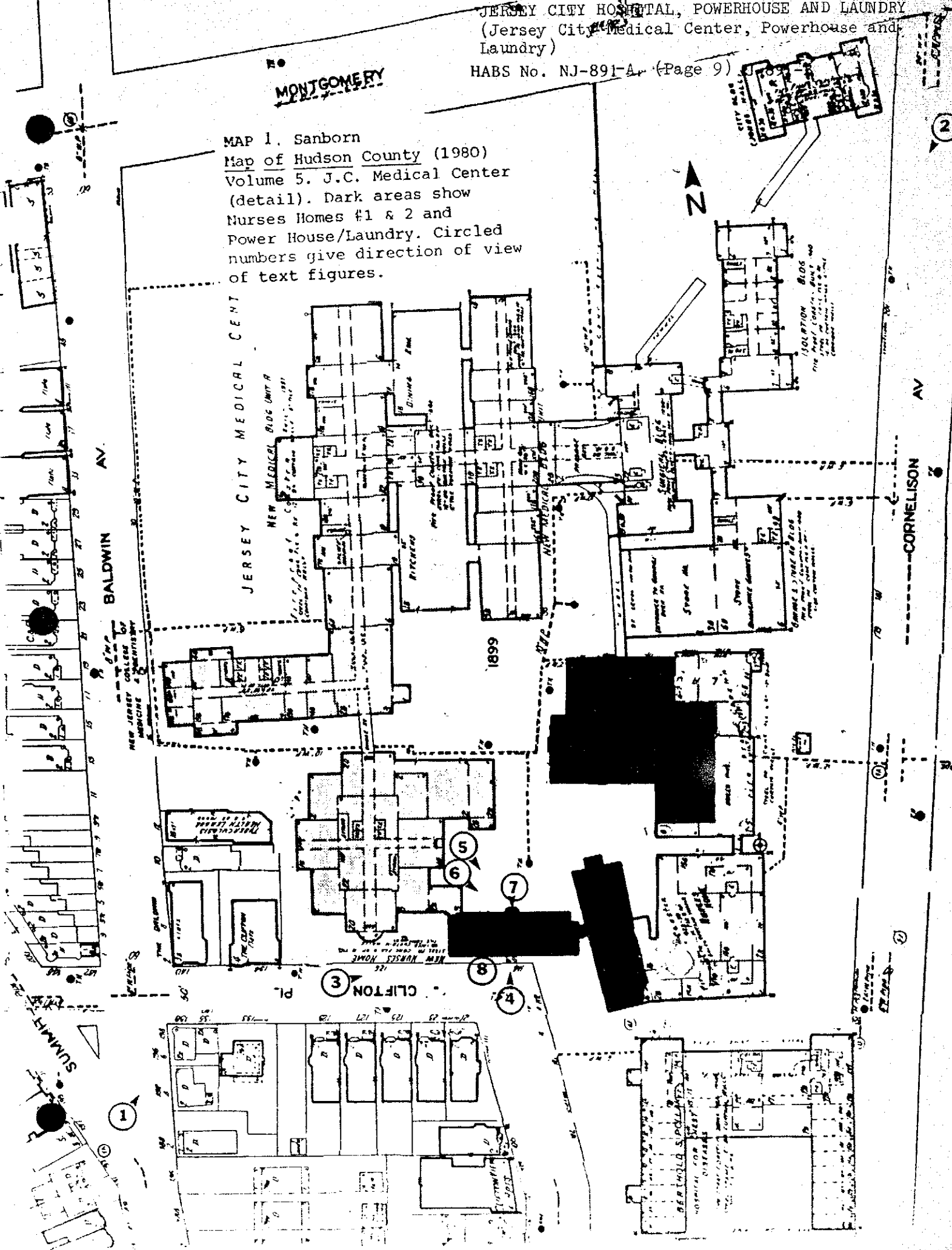
Louis Checkman, Photographer, Cobra
Construction Company, Inc., General
Contractors, 149 Cator Avenue, Jersey
City, New Jersey, 07305

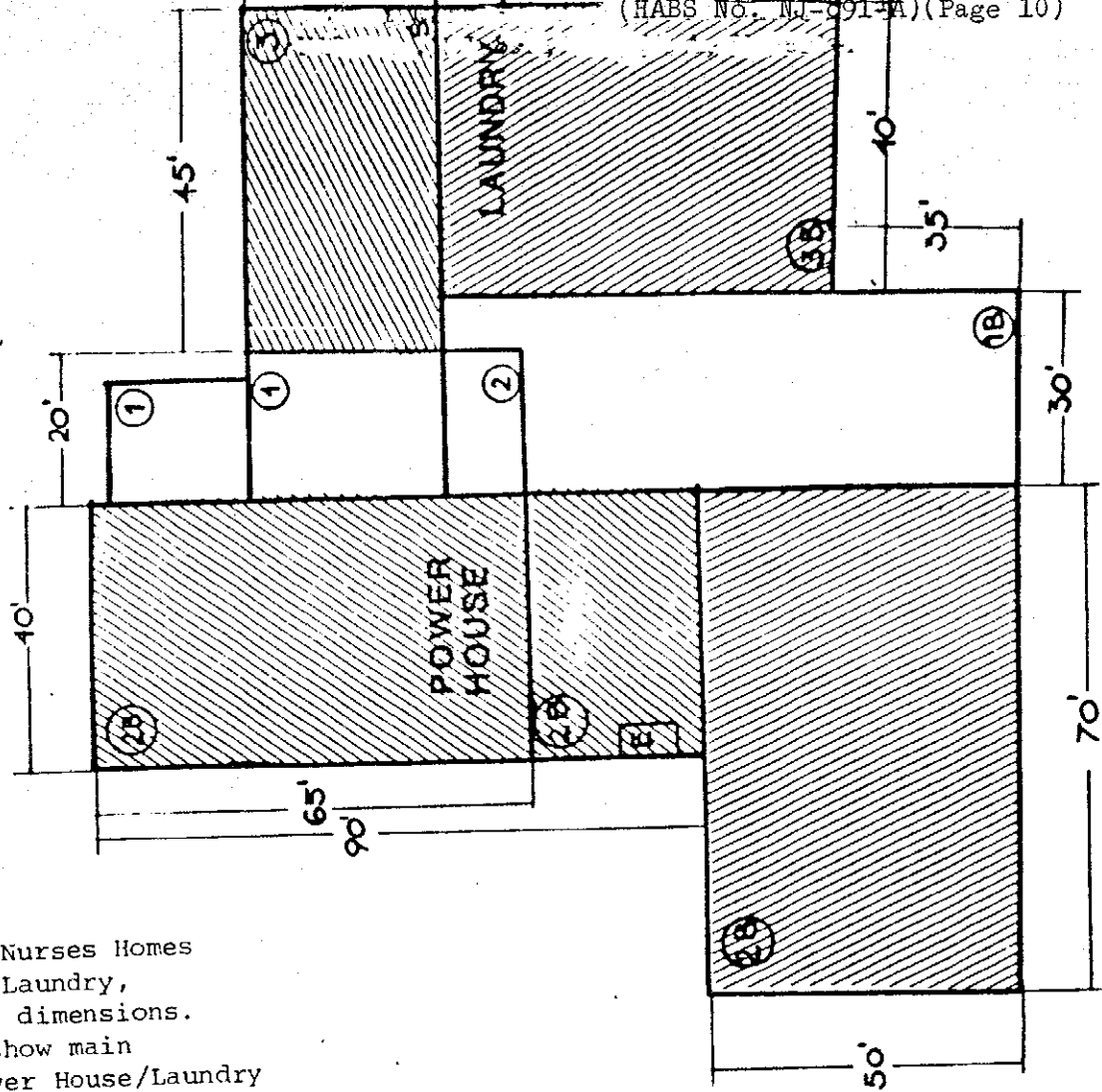
Irina Pasmur (URD Division),
Cartographer

Edited and transmitted by: Holly K. Chamberlain, Historian
HABS
08/10/87

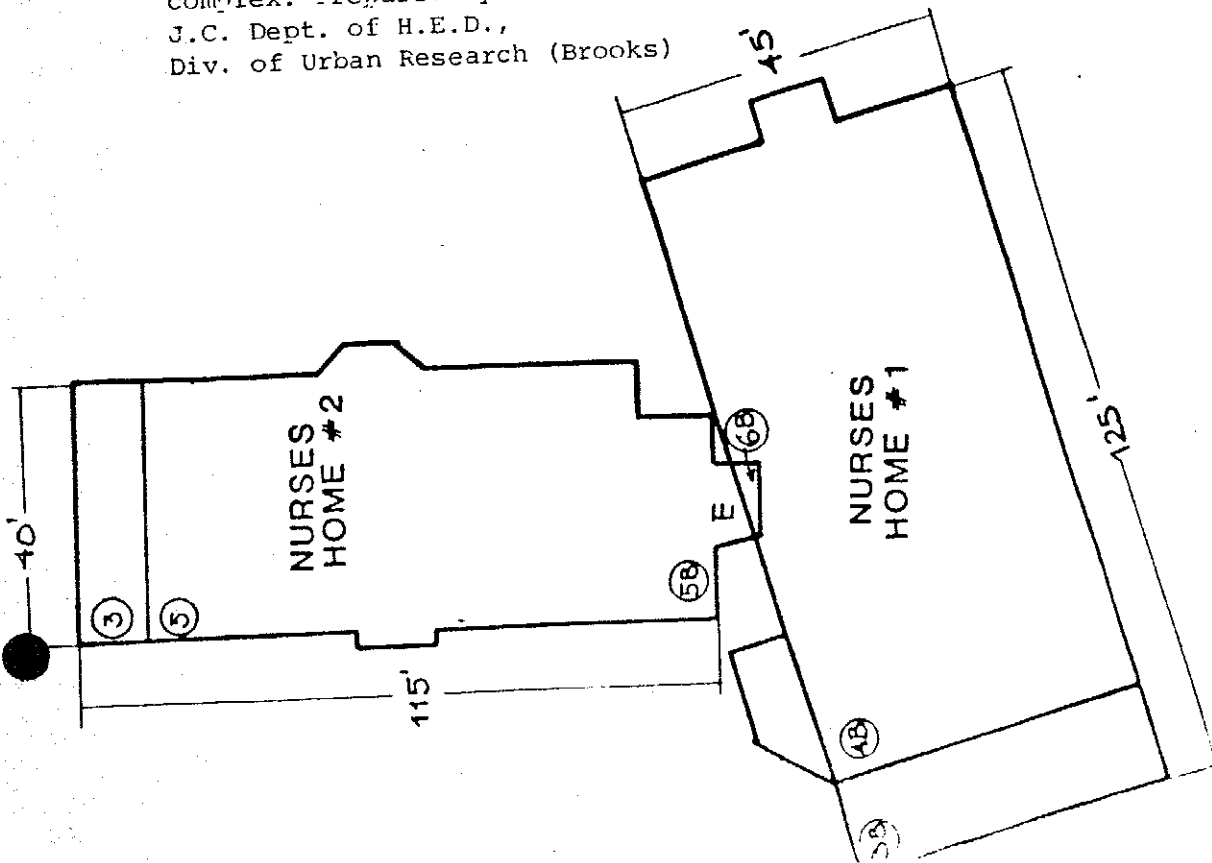
MONTGOMERY

MAP 1. Sanborn
Map of Hudson County (1980)
Volume 5. J.C. Medical Center
(detail). Dark areas show
Nurses Homes #1 & 2 and
Power House/Laundry. Circled
numbers give direction of view
of text figures.

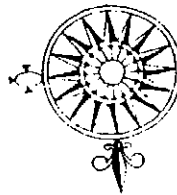




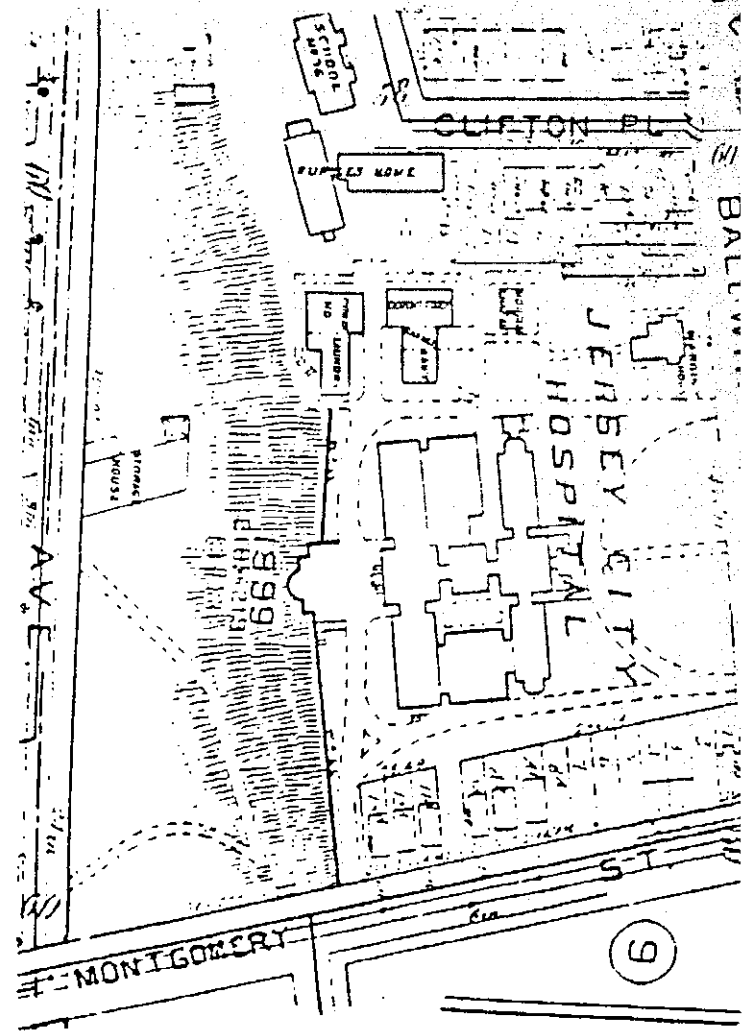
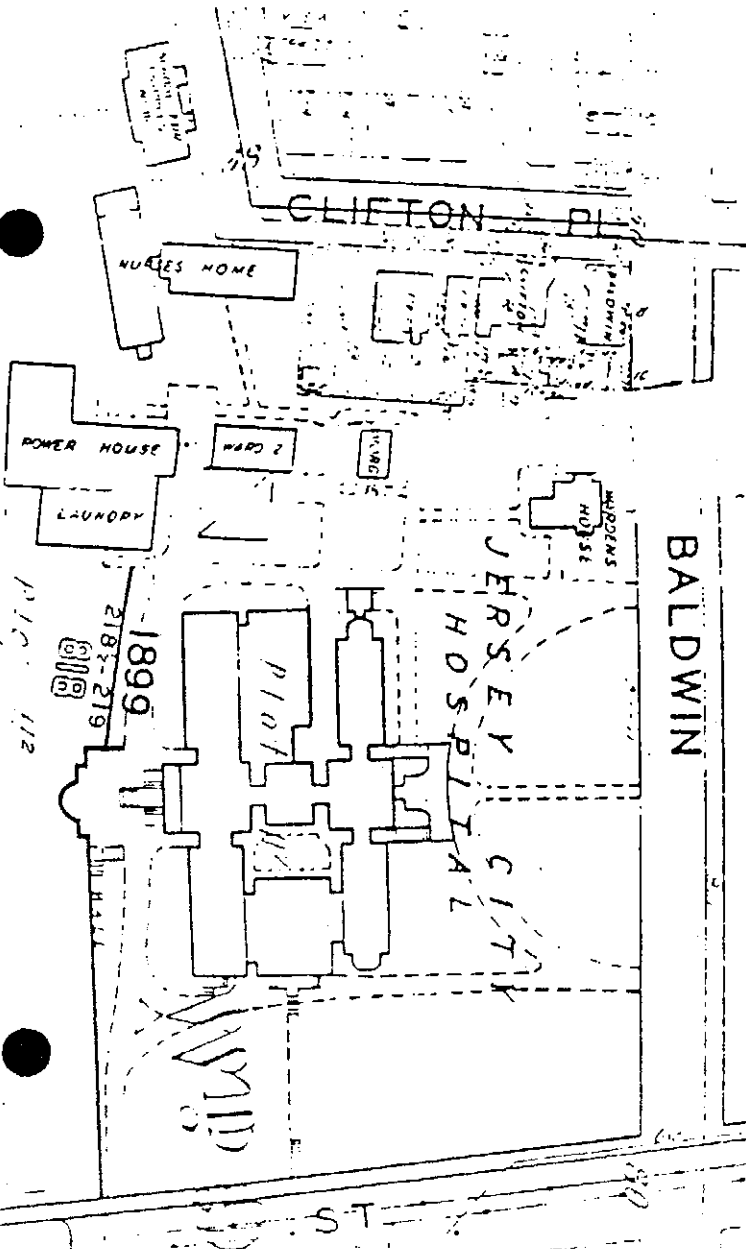
MAP 2. Plans of Nurses Homes
 and Power House/Laundry,
 with approximate dimensions.
 Striated areas show main
 buildings of Power House/Laundry
 complex. Prepared by
 J.C. Dept. of H.E.D.,
 Div. of Urban Research (Brooks)



MAP 3. G.M. Hopkins & Co.
 Platbook(s) of Jersey City



1928



1919



Figure 1. Aerial view of Jersey City Medical Center looking toward the western facades. The Nurses' Homes can be seen at the Clifton Place turn (middle of photograph).
Photo: 1948. Collection of New Jersey Room, Free Public Library, J.C.

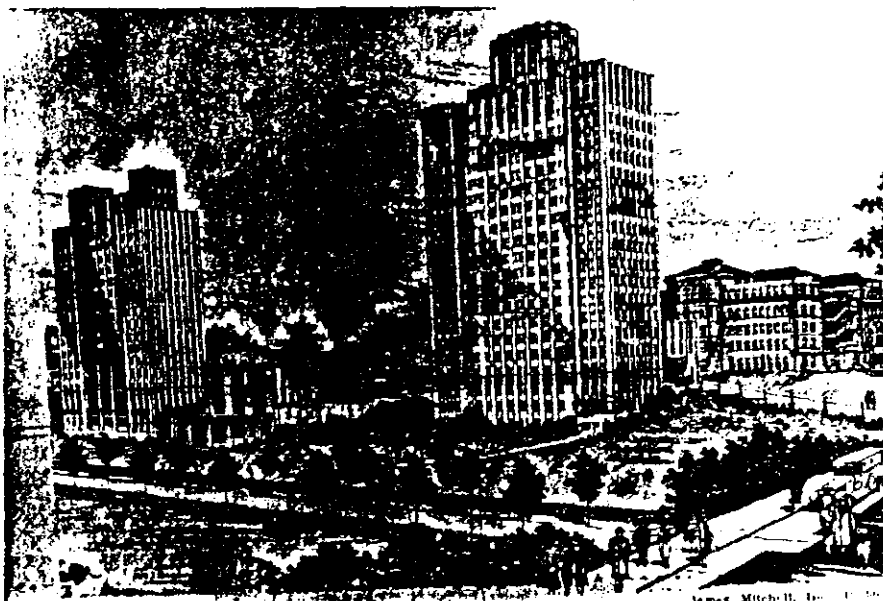
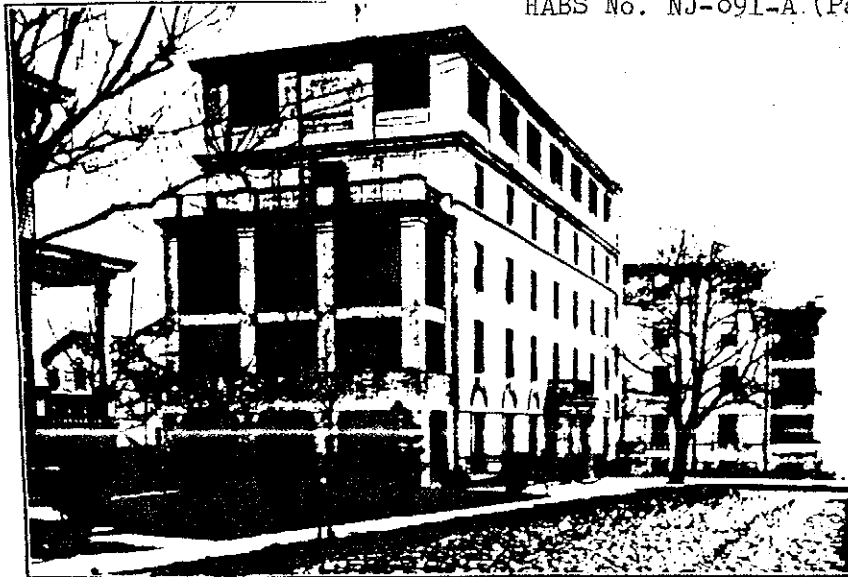


Figure 2. Cornelison Avenue facade looking toward the south. Power House/Laundry seen between tall Dental College (right) and new Nurses' Home (left). The 1902 main Hospital Building is at far right. Jersey City Chamber of Commerce Magazine, Jersey City, November, 1930. This preparatory drawing is by John T. Rowland, architect.



John H. Rowland, Architect

NURSES HOME

Figure 3. Symposium, 1924
 p. 13 (John H. should read
 John T. Rowland). Nurses'
 Homes #1 & 2 looking from
 west toward east at
 Clifton Place

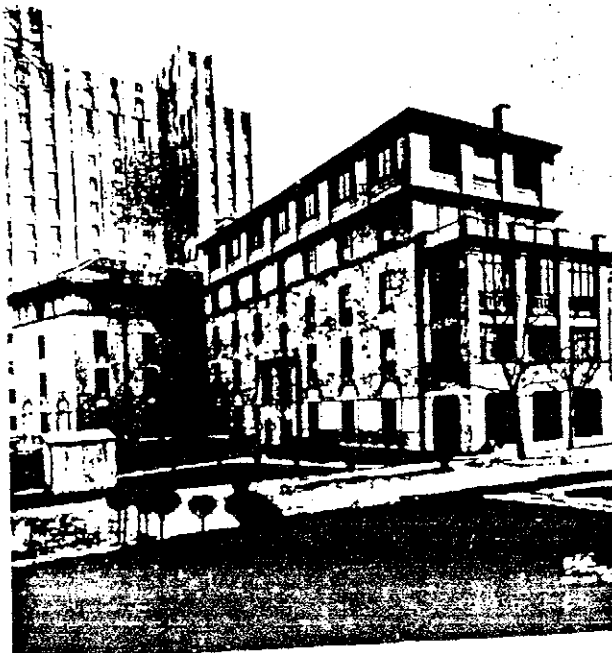


Figure 4. Senior Annual, 1930. Main south
 portal of Nurses' Home #2

Figure 5. Senior Annual, 1930. North and
 west facades of Nurses' Homes #1 & 2.
 Now Nurses' Home #3 at left



Figure 6. Mnemsyne, 1929. North and west facades of Nurses' Home #2

Figure 7. Northern portal of Nurses' Home #2. Photo: Joseph C. Brooks, 1980





Large Reception Room with sun-
 porch behind (1926)

Small Reception Room with offi-
 cial behind

▲(1927)

▼(1931)



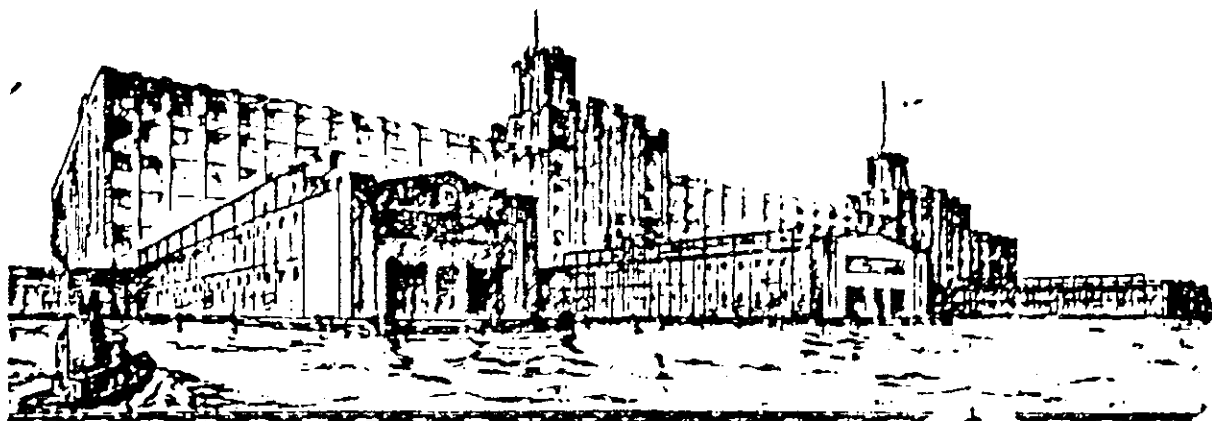
Figure 8. Interior of first
 story of Nurses' Home #2. From
 nurses' school annuals.

Reading Room (1927)

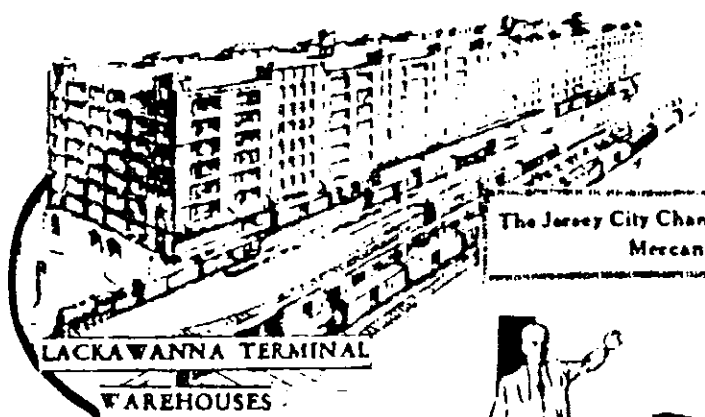
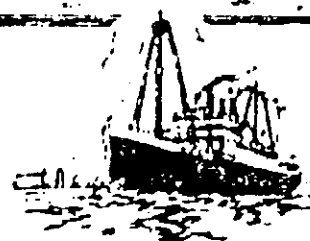


JERSEY CITY HOSPITAL, POWERHOUSE AND LAUNDRY (Jersey City Medical Center, Powerhouse and Laundry) HABS No. NJ-891-A (Page 16)

JERSEY CITY

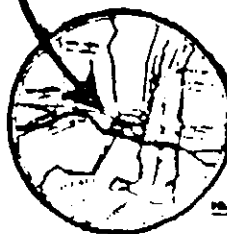


The Great "Rail-to-Keel" Pennsylvania Dock and Warehouse Terminal



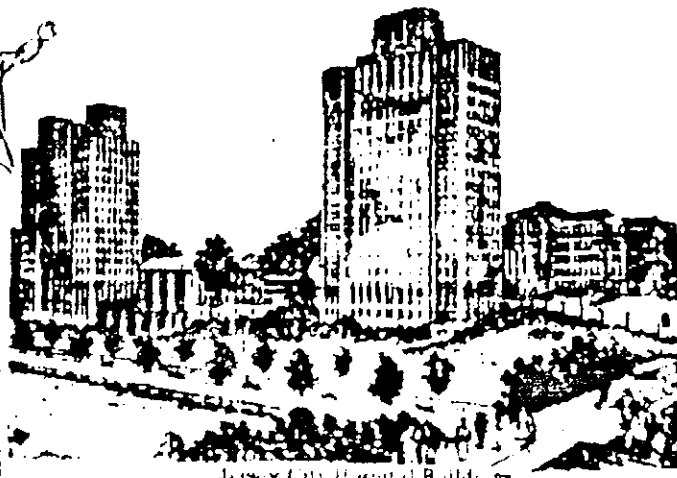
LACKAWANNA TERMINAL
WAREHOUSES

The Jersey City Chamber of Commerce offers its services to you for Factory, Mercantile, Professional or Residential Location



LOCATE IN

JERSEY CITY



Jersey City Hospital Building

Survey of Jersey City . . . and Official Map . . . In this Issue